Accurate electrodeposition simulation of automobile bodies with edge-based smoothed finite element method using 4-node tetrahedral meshes



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What is Electrodeposition (ED) ?

<u>Outline</u>





- Most widely-used anti-rust basecoat methods for various metal products including carbodies.
- Depositing coating film by applying direct electric current in a paint pool.
- Relatively good at depositing a uniform film on bodies in complex shape.





What is Electrodeposition (ED)? Overview of the Carbody Paint Shop



Top Coat Top Coat Topcoat Oven To Assembly Line

ED is responsible for the basecoat of a carbody.



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What is Electrodeposition (ED)? <u>Photos of ED Process Line</u>













Importance of ED for Safety Quiz. Is this car safe as when it was new?



- No, because corrosion on the carbody severely damaged its structural health. (At worst, the engine may fall off.)
- As corrosion progresses, the design strength/stiffness cannot be guaranteed, although safety tests (such as crash tests) are usually conducted using new cars without corrosion.

ED coating is important for automotive safety.





Difficulty in ED for Carbodies



- Undercarriages are exposed to severe corrosive environments, especially due to seawater or snow-melting chemicals.
- Some undercarriage parts (such as a side sill) have baglike complex structures with many ED holes.
- It is not easy to deposit a required minimal thick film at the innermost faces of a bag-like structure, even for ED.
- Carbody design must consider the difficulty in ED process.





Need for ED Simulation

In a car company, this kind of battle may happens.



Corrosion Section

Strength/Stiffness Section

■ To resolve this battle,

ED simulations are important to optimal car design as well as crash simulations for automotive safety.





What is ED Simulation?

<u>Actual ED Line</u>

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Paint Pool
 Carbody with Motion
 Electrodes (Anodes)
 are reproduced in a computer.

ED Simulation Pool W/Motion (Anodes) Pool W/Motion (Anodes) Total Length: 20~30 m

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Time: 135.0 (s)

- Governing Equation: Electrostatic Laplace equation ($\nabla^2 \phi = 0$) in the paint pool domain.
- Boundary Condition (BC):
 - 1. Insulation BC,
 - 2. Anodic (electrode surface) BC,
 - 3. Cathodic (carbody surface) BC: Film resistance/growth constitutive model.

- Outputs:
 - 1. Surface potential,
 - 2. Current density,
 - 3. Coated film thickness.





Framework of ED Simulation



Framework for Solid Mechanics Simulation





Issue 1: Impossible to make a good HEX mesh

for carbodies.



Sliced view of a carbody mesh

- An ED simulation requires a mesh for the space around the carbody like CFD.
- In contrast to CFD, an ED mesh includes the room space and many narrow spaces among plates (such as side sills).





Meshing Issue 1 (cont.)

Only the surface mesh is shown.







Zoom-in view of a carbody mesh

- The shape of a carbody is too complex to be discretized into a good HEX mesh.
- The cutcell or snappy HEX meshing is basically not suitable for the geometry with many holes.

(: Massive increase in DOF, Linear mesh convergence rate, Presence of hanging nodes or polyhedral cells, Inapplicable to solid dynamics, etc.)

TET meshes are preferable in ED simulation.





Meshing Issue 2

Issue 2: Both the standard 4-node and 10-node tetrahedral elements are inconvenient.

 4-node TET (T4) has poor accuracy with only a linear mesh convergence rate.
 ⇒ FEM-T4 and FVM-T4 require very fine meshes to obtain accurate results.



10-node TET (T10) has good accuracy with a quadratic mesh convergence rate; however, T10 mesh requires massively large DOF to represent complex shapes without any kink of element shapes.







Meshing Issue 2 (cont.)

 \Rightarrow If there is a small **hole** on a carbody, the surface mesh around the hole looks like...



- X T10 w/ kink leads to severe accuracy loss.
- X T10 w/o kink leads to a massive increase in DOF.

The standard T4 and T10 elements are both inconvenient for carbodies to achieve accurate simulation with minimal DOF.





Motivation

By the way, ...

- The smoothed finite element method (S-FEM) has become popular in recent years as a next-generation high-performance FEM.
- Especially, the edge-based S-FEM using T4 mesh (ES-FEM-T4) is known to achieve a superlinear mesh convergence rate even with T4 meshes.

Therefore, we expect that...

ES-FEM-T4 could be a solution for the meshing issues to achieve fast and accurate ED simulation.







Development of ED simulator using ES-FEM-T4 for practical (fast & accurate) ED simulations.

Table of body contents:

- 1. Formulation of ES-FEM-T4 in ED Simulation
- 2. Benchmark Analyses
- 3. Validation Analyses (for the ED Constitutive Model)
- 4. Summary





Formulation of ES-FEM-T4 in ED Simulation





What is S-FEM?

- The Smoothed finite element method (S-FEM) is a relatively new FE formulation proposed by Prof. G. R. Liu in 2006.
- S-FEM is one of the **strain smoothing** techniques.
- There are several types of classical S-FEMs, depending on the domains of strain smoothing.
- For example in 2D triangular (T3) mesh:







How popular is S-FEM?

Number of journal papers written in English whose title contains "smoothed finite element":



The attraction of S-FEM is expanding continuously.





Applications of S-FEMs in Our Lab

Solid mechanics

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Brief Formulation of ES-FEM

Let us consider two 3-node triangular (T3) elements in 2D.

- Calculate [B] (= dN/dx) at each element as usual.
- Distribute [B] to the connecting edge with an area weight and build [^{Edge}B].
- Calculate current density (J) and nodal internal current {i^{int}} in each edge smoothing domain.



Mathematical Formulation of ES-FEM

 $^{Edge}V_k$: Volume of the edge smoothing domain of Edge k,

$$^{\mathrm{Edge}}V_k = \sum_{e \in ^{\mathrm{Edge}} \mathbf{E}_k} ^{\mathrm{Elem}} V_e / 6$$
.

- $^{\text{Edge}}\boldsymbol{E}_k$ is the set elements connected to Edge k,
- $^{\text{Elem}}V_e$ is the volume of Element *e*,
- "6" denotes the number of edges of a tetrahedron.

•
$$[^{\text{Edge}}B_k]$$
: B-matrix of Edge k ,
 $[^{\text{Edge}}B_k] = \frac{1}{\text{Edge}_{V_k}} \sum_{e \in ^{\text{Edge}}E_k} ([^{\text{Elem}}B_e]^{\text{Elem}}V_e/6)$.





Mathematical Formulation of ES-FEM

• $\{ {}^{\text{Edge}}J_k \}$: Current density vector of Edge k,

$$\{^{\mathrm{Edge}}J_k\} = -\kappa [^{\mathrm{Edge}}B_k] \{^{\mathrm{Edge}}\phi_k\}.$$

• κ is the electric conductivity (constant),

• $\{^{\text{Edge}}\phi_k\}$ is the nodal potential vector related to Edge k,

• {^{Edge} i_k^{int} }: Contribution of Edge k for the internal current vector, {^{Edge} i_k^{int} } = $- [^{\text{Edge}}B_k]^{\text{T}} \{^{\text{Edge}}J_k\} {^{\text{Edge}}V_k}$.

• $\{i^{int}\}$: The total internal current vector,

$$\{i^{\text{int}}\} = \sum_{k \in \mathbf{G}} \{ {}^{\text{Edge}} i_k^{\text{int}} \}.$$

• **G** is the set of all edges in the FE mesh.

That's all. The formulation is quite simple!





Characteristics of ES-FEM-T4

<u>Advantage</u>

- Superlinear mesh convergence (as fast as 2nd-order elems.).
- Same input file as FEM-T4.
- No increase in DOF (nodal potentials only; ∴ easy to code).

<u>Disadvantage</u>

- Longer assembling time of [K] (~x2 of FEM-T4 w/ the same mesh).
- Wider bandwidth in [K] (~x3 of FEM-T4 w/ the same mesh).
- No longer an independent T4 element.

A node is referred by 6 elements. \Rightarrow 7 nodes.





A node is referred by 12 edges, \Rightarrow 12 elements, \Rightarrow 13 nodes.









- Each interfacial node of the active pool elements is tied in the active body elements with the multi-point constraint (**MPC**).
- The classical method of Lagrange multiplier is used to satisfy the MPCs.





Other 3 Key Features in ED Formulation

2. Iterative Matrix Solver

The minimum residual method (**MINRES**) with the point Jacobi preconditioner is adopted.

- Electrostatic Laplace equation forms a symmetric matrix.
- Matrix is indefinite due to the method of Lagrange multiplier used by the overset mesh method etc..
- CG cannot solve symmetric indefinite systems without static condensation.

 In contrast, MINRES can solve symmetric indefinite systems without static condensation.
 (Why is MINRES without static condensation not so popular?)







- The polarization curve (Robin BC) is ideally described with the Tafel eq..
- In reality, H₂ bubbles generated on cathode block the current, forming an "S" shaped polarization curve.
- An "S" shape may cause infinite loops in the Newton-Raphson method.
- The ED solver needs to introduce special treatments, such as cutback of $\delta \phi$; yet, the loop count becomes a lot (~8 times) anyway.



Benchmark Analyses





4-Plate BOX Simulation



Imitating a bag-like structure such as a side sill in a carbody.

- Film thickness on the innermost surface (G-Face) is the most important so as to guarantee corrosion protection.
- The film thickness is evaluated with 4 different meshes for mesh validation using FEM-T4 and ES-FEM-T4.

4-Plate BOX Simulation

Overview of Me<u>shes</u>

3.2 mm Mesh Seed Size (31k T4 elem.)

4-Plate BOX Simulation Film Thickness on A-Face (outermost surface) 25 FEM, 3.2 mm FEM, 1.6 mm FEM, 0.8 mm FEM, 0.4 mm ES-FEM, 3.2 mm ES-FEM, 1.6 mm ES-FEM, 0.8 mm ES-FEM, 0.4 mm 0 120 150 180 210 240 270 300 30 60 90 () Mesh seed size Time, t(s)

FEM results (dashed lines) have *tiny* errors due to mesh coarseness.

4-Plate BOX SimulationFilm Thickness on G-Face (innermost surface)

4-Plate BOX Simulation

<u>Comparison of Mesh Convergence Rate on G-Face</u>

4-Plate BOX Simulation

Comparison of Calculation Time

on a PC (only 1 CPU: Intel i9-9960X)

Mesh Size	FEM-T4	ES-FEM-T4
3.2 mm	7 s	10 s
1.6 mm	8 s	2 3 14 s
0.8 mm	12 s 5	26 s
0.4 mm	41 s	125 s

- With the same mesh, ES-FEM is slower than FEM by x2.
- For the same accuracy, ES-FEM is faster than FEM by x4.

ES-FEM-T4 is supremely efficient in comparison to FEM-T4.



- Half-body analysis (only right-hand side).
- Entire line shape, carbody motion, and electrode conditions are faithfully reproduced.
- 1000 timesteps in 300 s (i.e., average $\Delta t = 0.3$ s).
- The film thickness is evaluated with 3 different meshes for mesh validation using FEM-T4 and ES-FEM-T4.





Actual Line Simulation Overview of Surface Mesh of <u>10M</u> Element Mesh



There are many ED holes around narrow spaces among plates.





Actual Line Simulation Overview of Surface Mesh of <u>16M</u> Element Mesh



There are many ED holes around narrow spaces among plates.





Actual Line Simulation Overview of Surface Mesh of <u>51M</u> Element Mesh



- There are many ED holes around narrow spaces among plates.
- The difference in the mesh can be seen clearly by zooming in around a hole.





Actual Line Simulation Zoom in View around a Hole on Carbody



- There are many ED holes around narrow spaces among plates.
- The difference in the mesh can be seen clearly by zooming in around a hole.





<u>Reference Solution of ϕ (ES-FEM with 51M Elems.)</u>







Reference Solution of j (ES-FEM with 51M Elems.)



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<u>Reference Solution of h (ES-FEM with 51M Elems.)</u>







Film Thickness Distribution with <u>51M</u> Elem. Mesh

(Clipped View on Side Sill) ES-FEM-T4





- FEM shows a little thicker result. (The center of the side sill is Yellow.)
 Reference Solution
- The ES-FEM result is regarded as a reference solution. (The center of the side sill is Green.)





Film Thickness Distribution with 16M Elem. Mesh

(Clipped View on Side Sill) ES-FEM-T4





FEM shows a much thicker result. (The center of the side sill is Orange.)

 ES-FEM shows a similar result. (The center of the side sill is Green.)





Film Thickness Distribution with 10M Elem. Mesh



 FEM shows a massively thicker result. (The center of the side sill is Red.)
 ES-FEM shows a little thicker result. (The center of the side sill is Yellow.)

Let's compare the time history of film thickness at a certain point.





Actual Line Simulation Comparison of Time-histories of Film Thickness 10 9 Film Thickness, $h \ (\mu m)$ 8 7 6 5 FEM-T4 w/ 10M Elems. 4 FEM-T4 w/ 16M Elems. 3 FEM-T4 w/ 51M Elems. ES-FEM-T4 w/ 10M Elems. 2

ES-FEM-T4 w/ 51M Elems. 150 180 240 120210 270Time, t(s)

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FEM-T4 with 51M elems. and ES-FEM-T4 with 10M elems. has almost comparable accuracy. ES-FEM-T4 almost gets mesh converges with 16M elems.

ES-FEM-T4 w/ 16M Elems.



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Calculation Time

On a cluster (TSUBAME3.0: Intel Xeon E5-2680 v4, using 64 CPUs)

# of Elements	FEM-T4	ES-FEM-T4
10M	1.6 h	1.9 h
16M	2.3 h	3.4 h
51M	6.0 h	8.5 h

- With the same mesh, ES-FEM is slower than FEM by x1.5.
- For the same accuracy, ES-FEM is faster than FEM by x3.

For accurate ED simulations, ES-FEM-T4 is much better than FEM-T4.







Our ES-FEM code scales to some extent up to 64 CPUs at least.

 \therefore Some tasks, including MPCs for the moving boundary, are not yet fully parallelized (our future work).





Validation Analyses (for the ED Constitutive Model)





Framework of ED Simulation



Framework for Solid Mechanics Simulation



Two Complexities in ED Phenomena

There are two nonlinearities in ED phenomena, thus our ED boundary model consists of 2 sub-models:

1. Film resistance model

Film resistance *R* is NOT linear to film thickness *h*: $R \neq \alpha h$

R: resistance, α : const., *h*: film thickness.

2. Film growth model

Film growth rate \dot{h} is NOT linear to current density *j*: $\dot{h} \neq \beta j$

 \dot{h} : film growth rate, β : const., *j*: current density.

We need to conduct many lab tests to reveal these nonlinear behavior.





Outline of the One-Plate Test



- One plate is dipped in paint contained in a cylindrical anode.
- Many tests are conducted with various applied voltages, deposition times, and stirring speed: about 150 tests in total. (·· In-situ measurement of film thickness is impossible.)



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Procedure to Identify Film Resistance Model



Procedure to Identify Film Growth Model





The simulation curves agree well with the experimental ones with small error in the results at lower voltages.







The simulation curves agree well with the experimental ones with small error in the results at lower voltages.







The simulation curves agree well with the experimental ones with small error in the results at lower voltages.





4-Plate BOX Test/Simulation

<u>Outline</u>



- Model for stirred BC is assigned to the outer surface, while that for unstirred BC is assigned to the other inner surfaces.
- Accuracy of surface potential and final film thickness at the measurement points are evaluated using ES-FEM-T4.





4-Plate BOX Simulation <u>Photo of the 4-Plate BOX Test</u>







4-Plate BOX Test/Simulation

<u>Comparison of Surface Potential Time Histories</u>



The simulation curves agree well with the experimental ones.





4-Plate BOX Test/Simulation Comparison of Current Density Time Histories



The simulation curves agree well with the experimental ones.







The simulation curves agree well with the experimental ones, except the curve on the innermost face (G-Face): $3 \mu m$ error.

Further improvement of the ED constitutive model is required.







(only right-hand side).

Ch.5: Side Sill

- Entire line shape, carbody motion, and electrode conditions are faithfully reproduced.
- Model for stirred BC is assigned to the outer surface, while that for unstirred BC is assigned to the inner surface.
- Accuracy of surface potential and final film thickness at the measurement points are evaluated using ES-FEM-T4.





Time History of Applied Voltage to Anodes



- "Stage 1" denotes anodes on the entry side, whereas "Stage 2" denotes anodes on the exit side.
- Note that there is a sudden turn on/off of power.





Comparison of Surface Potential Time Histories



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Comparison of Surface Potential Time Histories



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Comparison of Surface Potential Time Histories







Comparison of Final Film Thickness

Point	Measued (μm)	Simulated (μm)	Error (μm)
Ch.2: Hood	20.1	21.4	+1.3 (+6.5%)
Ch.3: Side Door	19.0	21.0	+2.0 (+10.5%)
Ch.4: Roof	17.0	19.3	+2.3 (+13.5%)
Ch.5: Side Sill	20.0	21.6	+1.6 (+8.0%)
Ch.6: Floor	—	14.5	—
Ch.7: Back Door	23.0	20.3	-2.7 (-11.7%)

The maximum error is less than 3 μm, and thus our ED constitutive model has practical accuracy in the actual line simulation.











Summary

<u>Conclusion</u>

- ES-FEM-T4 was applied to the actual ED line simulations.
- The high accuracy of ES-FEM-T4, owing to its superlinear (almost quadratic) mesh convergence rate in ED simulation, was confirmed compared to the poor accuracy of FEM-T4.
- Our parallelized ES-FEM-T4 code enabled us to obtain mesh-converged accurate solutions of actual line simulations in reasonable time with relatively coarse meshes.

<u>Future Works</u>

- Improvement of the ED resistance/growth models.
- Further validation of the ED models on the actual lines.

Take-home Message: Why don't you us ES-FEM-T4?

Thank you for your kind attention.




Appendix



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Pre-processes for ED Simulation

- 1. Mesh generation for body & pool.
- Classification of body surfaces into inner & outer parts to assign different BCs (with/without stirring BC).
- 3. Mesh partitioning & reordering for MPI parallelization.
- 4. Preparation of input file including body motion definition.
 - \Rightarrow Send to ED Solver











Mechanism of Electrodeposition



■ Paint cations ("+" ions) are attracted to the cathode.

- Paint ions gradually lose their electrical charge and are aggregated into paint particles.
- Some of the paint particles are deposited as coating film. Meanwhile, the rests are diffused and re-dissolved.
- In contrast to a simple electroplating, accurate numerical simulation of ED film thickness is quite difficult.





What is ED Simulation ?

ED simulation provides film thickness, surface potential, surface current density and so on.



ED Boundary Models

Film Resistance Model

- > It represents the relation between $h, \Delta \phi_{cat}$ and j_{cat} .
- Used to decide film resistance.
- Flow rate dependency is considered.

$$j_{cat}(\Delta\phi_{cat},h) = \begin{cases} c_1(h)\Delta\phi_{cat} & : \text{With stirring} \\ c_1(h)\left(e^{c_2(h)\Delta\phi_{cat}} - e^{-c_2(h)\Delta\phi_{cat}}\right) : \text{Without stirring} \end{cases}$$

Film Growth Model

> It represents the relation between h, j_{cat} and j_{dif} .

Used to decide film growth rate.

After deposition :
$$j_{\text{difA}}(j_{\text{cat}}, h) = \frac{(j_{\text{cat}} + d_1(h))^{d_2(h)}}{d_1^{d_2(h) - 1} d_2(h)} - \frac{d_1(h)}{d_2(h)}$$



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